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ACE TAXI SERVICE INC

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Testimony of Ace Taxi Service Inc

Before the Legislature's Insurance and Real Estate Committee

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

1:00 PM, Room 2D

RE: HB 5523 AAC Insurance Requirements For Transportation Network Co's

Good Afternoon. My Name is Michael Olschafskie. I am the President of Ace Taxi Service Inc, East Hartford Cab Company and Ace Transportation. My companies have been safely providing rides for hire in Connecticut since June 1st, 1985.

I am here today to ask that you please amend HB 5523 AAC Insurance Requirements For Transportation Network Companies.

The taxi and livery industries need the following changes to be able to compete with transportation network companies like UBER and LYFT.

- 1. A temporary public service license issued for 90 days while the FBI/CT State Police fingerprint back ground checks and physical exam are completed. Currently it takes 8-12 weeks for my company to put a driver on the road while a TNC like UBER is using a social security number check that goes back 7 years and takes 48 hours. I prefer the fingerprint background check for public safety. The current system puts all taxi and livery companies at a huge disadvantage. When a applicant comes to our office and we tell them it will be 8-12 weeks, 9**

- out of 10 say I need a job now. Fewer drivers mean longer wait times and lost business for the taxi and livery companies.
2. I am asking that all Taxi and Livery companies be allowed to insure their vehicles as the Transportation Network Companies would be allowed to under this bill.
 3. I am asking that HB 5523 be amended to allow the same pricing options as TNC's. Currently the TNC's are using a "price surging" system where they charge more as it gets busier, they claim that model gets more drivers out on the road. I would like to institute this pricing system so that my companies can get more drivers out on the road during busy times and offer discounts during slower times. Under the current system, the rates are set by the CT Department of Transportation and we are not allowed to alter the tariff. CONNDOT has refused to allow to change are pricing while the TNC's basically charge whatever they want.

Please amend HB 5523 so that Transportation Network Companies like UBER do not have an unfair competitive advantage over small businesses like my companies. I am willing to compete on a level playing field regarding insurance, pricing, background checks, signage and use of private vehicles. Please don't legislate us out of business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Olschafskie
President
Ace Taxi Service Inc
East Hartford Cab Company Inc